

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, November 15, 1909, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Washington, D.C.  
November 15, 1909. My dear Alec:

Of course I've treated you abominably about writing, but we are busy. Charlie wants things settled as speedily as possible and we are working as fast as we can.

Charlie and Grace are going to take Mamma's house. I am almost sorry, it seems as if we might perhaps have taken it for our winter home, but after all it means much more to them. Now comes the question of the Corot and I am beginning to feel that I want it myself. Do you mind if I do buy it? Out of my cash property that is. It's lowest value at which we hold it is \$12000.00, but Mr. Fischer the art dealer does not consider \$18000.00 excessive. My feeling is that I haven't anything to represent my father handsomely. Grace has the house, Love Disarmed and other things. The more I see of the picture the better I like it and it will just suit our library. My hesitation is — the others, Gracie especially, want it also and whether I can spare \$12,000 cash. Of course I get \$200,000.00 on paper, but I don't know yet what marketable value this is. Please telegraph me what you think.

We are disgusted about the jewelry. Tiffany of whom Papa bought it has put it down to sometimes a fourth of what they sold it for. Poor little Daisy is again cheated, her new \$1500.00 ruby is assessed by the people of whom it was purchased at \$200.00! I think there is a fatality in rubies. I don't think we'll go to Tiffany's any more. We've had people by the dozen valuing things and the way they come out 2 is stunning. A little iron thing I found lying around loose is valued at \$300.00! And a sword the Smithsonian experts declare the finest they ever saw which they could not afford to buy, but think the Kensington museum would be glad to get at \$500.00. I guess the personal property will total up to about seventy thousand dollars, but I doubt whether it represents it's cost to Papa. I am so

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sorry about Daisy's ruby. You know she felt so badly about the one she bought, this is why Mamma left her hers and now they have sat down even more severely on Mamma's.

Your letter came this morning and was dear. Gracie has been staying with me these last two nights and I have tucked her into bed as if she were my own child and her eyes fill with tears. In fact tears are very near to her eyes these days and she is very very gentle. Gipseys says she is the most generous person she knows. She bought a good Victor graphophone in San Francisco just to amuse the passengers with on her way down the coast and bringing it back she gave it to Rosalie. I think she inherits a lot from my mother through her own. She is more like Mamma in her capability and quick intellect and decision than any other descendent and I think she has latent in her a lot of artistic feeling and much of what repels you is simply her defensive armour put on to conceal the deep feeling of which she has been taught to be ashamed.

I am so happy to be here and to get gradually used to knowing Mamma is not here. But it is hard and Alec dear you don't know how much just the knowledge she was within call if I needed her meant to me. There's nobody now to call me "silly little girl" the way she did, Grandmother though I be. Beside her I could really feel myself so and 3 the blessedness of it. I can only try to pass it on and just now Gracie seems the one who needs it most.

They have put glasses on poor little alexander IV and it is dreadful. The air of the professor they give him is absurd. The only comfort is that Dr. Wilmer says he probably won't have to wear them more than a couple of years and that the trouble is too far sightedness with unequal vision, which of course is much better than near-sight.

Much love, Your Mabel. November 14, 1909.